

Abrahams sacrifice foretells Christ's sacrifice_

We will study **Genesis 22** verse by verse.

'After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, 'Abraham!' and he said, 'here am I.' ^{22:1} As we read through this chapter, we find that Abraham is always expressed in the same manner. In verse 11 it again says that an angel called him saying: Abraham, Abraham, and he answered, and said here I am! Abraham is a type of the Lord Jesus on earth who also addresses Himself as 'I am.' Within the context of the Old Testament the 'I am' is Jehovah and within the framework of the whole Bible, it is the Lord Jesus! Hence the Lord Jesus often said in the Gospel of John, 'I am.' Jesus saying 'I am,' is verified 23 times in the Gospel of John, seven of them are specifically to affirm His true identify. Throughout John's writings, he constantly employs the number 7.

'He said, take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.' ^{22:2}

The word 'only' means unique. The only son refers to the son with the firstborn right. He is the bearer of the promise, the final heir. The words 'whom you love' also denote the firstborn son.

Who does Isaac picture? The Apostle Paul says in Galatians 4.

'For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the bondwoman and one by the free woman. ²³ But the son by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and the son by the free woman through the promise. ²⁸ And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise.' ^{4:22, 23, 28}

Isaac as the firstborn is a type of the Church: we are like Isaac, the children of promise and thus heirs. Ishmael mirrors the Jewish people, of Mount Sinai, and he with Hagar represent a life of slavery, as they are bent under the law.

But Isaac is the son of Sarah, born of the free. He is the heir. The name Isaac is a reference to the laughter of both Abraham and Sarah, when they heard that they would have a son. Indirectly, it is the joy of the impending new covenant, namely the birth of a son.

The son is not only the Lord Jesus Christ, but also the complete Church. Abraham, who is a type of the Lord Jesus, was the father of Isaac, a type of the Church. The one is a son of the other. Are we children of the Lord Jesus Christ? No, but our relationship with the Lord Jesus can be symbolised as a father - son relationship. The father by definition is the giver and the son the receiver. Everything we receive, we receive from the Lord Jesus Christ, for He is the Giver. The image of the father and son is

easily explained this context. Furthermore, both Romans 8 and Hebrews 2 says that the Lord Jesus would be the Firstborn among many brethren. As the Firstborn, He will lead many sons to glory.

Normally that is the work of the father, but it can also be accomplished by the oldest son.

Now we can return to Genesis 22:2. Abraham received the command from God to go to the country Moriah. Moriah means folly. Folly as defined in 1 Corinthians 1:18, is a feature of our present dispensation or the time we now live in: The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God unto salvation. Abraham will sacrifice Isaac, on one of the mountains as presided by God. That mountain is the same where centuries later the threshing floor of Araunah stood, as detailed in the history of David.

^{2Sam.24:15-25} David is a type and forerunner of Christ. This mountain is also known as the final Temple Mount, in which not only the altar stood, but also the Ark of the Covenant. That mountain on which Isaac was originally offered became the place where later the temple stood; the house of God.

To refresh our minds who today is the house of God? It is the Church. The word 'house of God' is

commonly referred to in 1 Timothy 3:15 as the Church. In other places we may discover other terms such as a 'dwelling' of God in the Spirit, ^{Eph. 2:22} or a spiritual house. ^{1Peter 2:5}

So God told Abraham to go to the land Moriah, and he had to offer Isaac as a burnt offering. The burnt offering is a rising sacrifice. Note that it was not an offering for sin, like the sin offering, the reason was not to take away sin or to receive forgiveness. The burnt offering is the highest sacrifice and includes all other offerings in the Book Leviticus. The burnt offering speaks of the transition from the old to the new. It pictures the final establishment of Christ kingdom or the new creation. Its message is the ascension and the glorification of Christ and the Church. It pictures the rapture of the Church, to enter the final rest. Then our work on earth is done, and we will receive our just reward.

'So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.'

^{Gen.22:3}

It is striking how submissive Abraham was, once God told him to sacrifice his son Isaac. He made no objections and did not protest. He just awoke early in the morning. We should respond similarly if we are commissioned

by the Lord. To wake early in the morning is to portray the resurrection from amongst the dead, as our Lord rise early on daybreak.

Who else woke early in the morning like our Lord from the grave? It was Joshua, who is an image of the Lord Jesus, who rose up early in the morning. ^{Joshua3}Awaking early in the morning is always a reference to the new day. In Isaiah 60:1, we read: Arise, (stand up) shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. The light is the radiance of the new covenant that will dawn and it is a reference to the resurrection of Christ. It is an image for the dawning of our day, with all its promises.

The Donkey

After the Lord had said to Abraham: Sacrifice your son, he did rise early in the morning, and saddled his donkey. The mere mentioning of the donkey by Abraham, seems to be irrelevant. Why is the donkey cited so frequently in the Bible? The reason is that the donkey pictures a true believer, the faithful remnant, the Church. A donkey dislikes being burdened by a heavy load. He has a clear threshold, and will simply refuse to take any burden once it exceeds his limit. From the one minute to the other he will collapse, or decide to end his ordeal. We may consider the donkey to be obstinate. It is pictured in a famous cartoon; Mariza the stubborn donkey.

In the Old Testament, the donkeys are always missing, or either someone is looking for them. They decline to carry a joke or any burden and thus they seek their freedom. Therefore Saul, when he was proclaimed as king in the Old Testament, it says he lost his donkeys, and he looked for them everywhere. Saul is a picture of the rule of law and the donkeys on the contrary pictures those who remain faithful or who are not burdened by the law, and therefore the contrast between the two. A donkey is characterized by its relatively large ears. He is skilled to listen. The Scripture says that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Therefore, the donkey is a picture of the believer who puts their trust in the Word of God.

In the Bible, some donkeys did speak, and they have lots to say. An example is the donkey of Balaam. ^{Num.22:21-35} There was even a donkey who spoke after he died, and it was the jawbone (mandible) of a donkey, that Samson used to defeat many Philistines. ^{Judges15:9-20} If we study the history of Samson, we noticed that the water came from the jawbone. ^{Judges 15:15}

The jaw of the donkey is a source of water. Water is an image of the Word of God. The jaw or mouth of the donkey, communicates the Words of God. What does a donkey actually say when he talks?

He bleats I-A. That is the abbreviation of the name Jehovah or Yahweh. He has always the name of the Lord on his lips. A donkey did listen with his

big ears, therefore, the calling on the name of the Lord. We also read of the donkey in Zechariah 9:9: 'Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king, is coming to you; righteous and having salvation; he is humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'

The phrase riding on a donkey expresses the submissive position of a donkey. Actually the ass is a caricature of a horse. It looks a little ridiculous riding on a donkey. Riding on a donkey is, by definition, opposed to the status of a king saddled on a horse. The king is not supposed to ride a donkey but on a horse. A Horse written in Hebrew is 'sus,' 60-6-60. A horse has three sixes. That conveys man in the sense of being Adam, the king of the earth or the king of the nations. The horse is the portrayal of the kingdom of man and the Son of man. A horse always speaks of kingship. A well-known prophecy do portray a donkey saying; 'your king will come riding on a donkey.' It talks about the first coming of the Lord Jesus, and the development of the events thereafter. It talks about the status of Jesus primarily in His first coming, as the submissive believer, as the One who yields, and is obedient to the Word of God. It speaks of the faith of Jesus Christ. Finally, the message is that the donkey is a picture of the Church. So it is not only of the Lord in His first coming to earth, but also now. The Lord saddled on the ass, is Him being one with the donkey, as He identified Himself with it. In Paul's letters, the donkey is simply called the Church, the Body of Christ of which

He is the head, and He directs it. Only in the future, with Christ second coming to earth, then the Lord Jesus Christ will ride on a horse. Then it will be the opposite of Christ first coming to earth, as then He will come in glory and majesty, to reveal His kingdom on earth.

The last instance we do read of the donkey, is with our Lord's entry into Jerusalem, when He asked two men to get the colt of a donkey, standing by its mother. It runs parallel with Genesis 22 ^{v.3}. He took two of his young men. The two young men are the two disciples that He had sent to retrieve the donkey.

Luke 19 ^{v.29} says: When he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olive, he sent two of the disciples, ²⁹ saying, go into the village in front of you, where on entering you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever yet sat. Untie it and bring it here. And they said, the Lord has need of it. ³⁵ And they brought it to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it.

19:29, 30, 35

The disciples found the foal of an ass on which no-one had never ridden on, so it was never burdened. Matthew 21:2 says the mother of the colt was tied. That ass is a picture of Israel under the law. The foal is born from the load-bearing donkey. The disciples did take their clothes to cover the donkey, and the clothing is the Church and then the Lord was recognized as the king via the disciples. The Pharisees were quick to rebuke Him and said, please rebuke your disciples, but He refused. In more specific terms a colt is a male foal and a filly a female foal. The foal is the Church born from the donkey. (Natural Israel) From the donkey, the remnant of Israel is born today, known as the Church. The donkey that was ridden by our Lord at the end of the 69th week was a foal that was never ridden upon, and it was never yoked in slavery. It can only picture the Church. At that time the Jewish nation was in slavery tied to a tree, but never the Church. The foal was not bound even though some may differ in opinion. The mother was tied, and the foal did not meander away from its mother. Mother Nature has a sound instinct. At the end of the Daniel's 70th week, the Church is the foal with Christ.

Hence the donkeys do picture the Church, and it's obvious as the Lord climbed on the donkey. The donkey was dressed with the garments of the disciples, so the foal is coupled to the twelve disciples. The only burden we do carry as the Church is light, and the yoke is easy. ^{Matt.11:30} We are ridden by the Lord, who is our head, who controls and leads us.

Back to Genesis 22:3. Abraham saddled his donkey, and two young men accompanied them. It is an image of the Church. In the Bible, you frequently come across the number two as by the naming of the two men, the two loaves or two fish, and so on. The double is always an expression of the birthright and in this case of the Church. So the donkey, the two young men and Isaac, yes they all picture the Church.

On the third day

'On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar. On the third day Abraham came to the place which God had told him.' ^{22:4}

The third day is another depiction of Christ's resurrection. The third day is a picture of the dawning of the new covenant. The reason is that the number three always denote the promises of God and its fulfilment. Therefore, on the third day they also found the donkeys belonging to Saul. ^{1Sam.10:1-16} In the Bible, we do read of two men, and something happening on the 3rd day.

The first coming to mind are the 2 spies who visited Rehab's house. The two men are not named as their names is a mystery. The 'two men' or two spies during Joshua's time is mentioned several times in the Bible, and

they portray the Church. The 'two' symbolize the Church as the firstborn. Paul stated this twice in his letters. ^{Rom.8:29; Heb.12:23} We as Paul strive to be appointed as sons, and once we are true to our calling, we will be His firstborn. We are known as a nation of both kings and priest.

When the 2 men were with Rahab, they secretly hid themselves, falling asleep on her roof top. Similarly, we too are asleep to the world, as God has called us from this world. Whilst being 'outside the camp' ^{Heb.13:13} we are familiar with the mystery of His will and we have the means to discern His plan. ^{Eph.1:9, 10} As the two spies were the first to enter the land Canaan, the Church too will also be the first to enter His inheritance. We are dead, but yet we are alive unto Christ. Even though Jericho or the earth is cursed, we continue to live as the two men. They remained with Rahab the harlot, for 2 days, and in the Bible a harlot is a type of Israel or the 10 lost tribes, who worshiped other god's. Their history is clearly portrayed in Ezekiel 17. They too will repent, and their house will remain standing, when the walls of Jericho collapse.

With Christ resurrection, there were 2 other men standing at the empty tomb. Later the same day Christ appeared to another two men who left Jerusalem to go to Emmaus. ^{Luke 24:13} The men ought to have waited at Jerusalem until the 3rd day, as the 3rd day will cause the change. The 3rd day is often mentioned in the Old Testament, and I am sure our Lord stated that to the 'two' going to Emmaus. -

'And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.' ^{Luke 24:27}

With the rapture of the Church the 2000 years of 'mystery' would have lapsed, ^{2Pet.3:8} but in the meantime, we need to hide like to the 2 spies with Rahab, but once Christ kingdom is revealed, we will be visible with Him in glory.

Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place (the mountain in the land of Moriah) from afar. Abraham saw from a distance so he foresaw all the 'events' that will happen on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. The phrase 'from afar of' is to illustrate that traditionally they noticed the events that would make an end of the old covenant, the events that would take place with Christ death and resurrection. Somehow they had an insight in the coming of the promised Son of Abraham, whose life would be dedicated to the service of God. On that basis, He would be made both King and High Priest after the order of Melchizedek.

Thus the coming of the Messiah, His exaltation on the distant mountain (in heaven) is clearly visible. During the Old Testament times, the prophets had an awareness of Christ who will appear. If they had to lift their eyes,

then with their eyes of faith, will see the place afar off. We too need to cast our eyes of faith to heaven. The 2 men who carried the load of the firewood, had their eyes fixed on the ground as they were encumbered by the law. They too should have lifted their eyes of faith like Abraham.

Top and bottom of the mountain

‘Then Abraham said to his young men, stay here with the donkey; I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you. Abraham with Isaac goes up the mountain.’ v.5

The mountain is like a huge altar made of stone. Almost every altar in the Old Testament was on a mountain. The temple mountain is called Mount Moriah.

Abraham said to the two young people: Abide ye here with the ass. They remained at the base of the mountain while Abraham and Isaac went to the mountain. So here we have a picture of the Church at the base of the mountain and on top of the mountain.

This pictures Mark 9. In that history we read of the transfiguration on the mountain, when the Lord took three of the twelve disciples, so a minority went up to the mountain. The other nine disciples remained at the base of the mountain. Peter, James and John were on the mountain with the Lord to witness the glorified Christ. They saw Christ in the position He attained after His suffering. His glorification was not made public but only to the three disciples on the mountain. Strangely most of the disciples did not notice it. Those who were at the base of the mountain were in the same time trying to contest the devil. We have the 9 disciples who were trying to fight Satan at the base of the mountain and the 3 disciples at the top of the mountain with Christ, oblivious of the battle the other 9 disciples had with Satan. That is a clear picture of our dispensation.

The two young men with the donkey down the mountain are like the majority of the disciples and Christians today, as their lives depict the believers who are soaked with the mundane earthly events. Abraham and Isaac, however, as the three disciples of the Lord Jesus, are a type of believers who are focused on heavenly things.

The question is: Where are you? On the mountain or at the bottom of the mountain? Those below do belong to the Church, but they wrestled with the enemy or Satan. In no way could he be contested with, because it is not the time. So while we are here on earth, we confront the powers of Satan in the world. We have a choice as we can wrestle with Satan, or arm ourselves with the spiritual armour mentioned by Apostle Paul. It is the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit. Eph.6:11-18
Satan is the prince of this world and what do we need to do about it?

Nothing! It is not the Lord's purpose that we are engrossed with the idea to fight the injustices of the world or the powers of Satan. The objective is that we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, for He is the One who did overcome the world. ^{1John 5:4} If we persistently fight the devil, it is regarded as disbelief. Then we do not believe that Christ has already overcome the world. We know the Lord Jesus from the Word of God. He is crowned with glory and honour. ^{Heb.2:9} He is exalted ^{Phil.2:9} and seated at the right hand of God. ^{Col.3:1} The idea is to follow the Lord and focus on Him alone. We will not sit down at the bottom the mountain fighting the world, but we will go with Him to the mountain. We should be aware of our high heavenly calling, and do share it in Christ. It does not reflect the future, as we are now seen as part of heaven. The future has already begun for us, and we need to live accordingly.

Presently Christ is not glorified in our society today, as it will only happen with Christ second coming to earth. Then it is the time of His glorification on earth. Our eyes of faith can project the future. Once He appears on earth, they will notice our glorified place with Christ in heaven. Our opponent - the devil - will be defeated on earth, once the glorified Christ appears with His second coming. Figuratively speaking it will be once our Lord descends down the mountain, not to overcome the world, but to judge the world.

They went together

'And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together.' ^{v.6}

Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it upon Isaac. Then Abraham took the fire and the knife in his hand. Abraham brought the fire with him to the mount.

The fire that Abraham had with him might have been the original fire that was used to receive his offering. It happened later in the history of Israel, in the days of the tabernacle. It was a sure sign that the Lord did receive the offering, as He flamed it Himself. ^{Judg.6:21, 1 King 18:38, 2Chron.7:1} This fire is blazed by God Himself, a sure sign of God communicating from heaven. Afterwards, Israel had to preserve the fire and keep it burning. ^{Lev.6:12, 13}

'And Isaac said to his father Abraham, 'my father!' And he said, here am I, my son. He said behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? ⁸Abraham said; God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son. So they went both of them together.' ^{v.7, 8} If someone had to ask us today saying I am a believer, and what should I sacrifice? Then the answer is we need to sacrifice our bodies, as we need

to present our bodies as a living and holy sacrifice to God to please Him.

Rom.12:1 Abraham told Isaac the Lord Himself will provide the lamb for a burnt offering. In practice we follow Christ, so they both went together. We as the Church (Isaac) go hand in hand together with Christ. (Abraham) It is about the unity of the Church with Christ. That union is explained in simple terms in John 17, and it is known as the intercessory prayer. We are one with Christ and Christ is one with us. We are of one mind. We also read of this union in John 5 and 14. Of course, there is a difference between Christ and the Church, but later in this history the differences will become clear.

‘When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.’ ^{v.9} This could not happen. Firstly, human sacrifices are an abomination to God.

Secondly is that Isaac is placed alive on the altar and is not possible according to the Levitical laws. It is impossible as a sacrifice needs to be slaughtered before it could be placed on the altar. Then why is Isaac alive on the altar? There is only one correct answer: because he is an image of the Church. We are alive and indeed our old bodies are placed on the altar. We put our bodies, which is essentially sinful and yet alive, on the altar, so God can quicken us, so now we are no longer doomed to die. Presently we are made holy and acceptable to God by placing our lives on the altar, or to His glory.

There is yet another example where the same principle applies, namely the 2 leavened breads known as the wave offering. ^{Lev. 23:15-20} Leaven is an example of man’s disobedience to His Word. ^{Gal.5:710} By definition the unleavened bread has nothing of the old creation in it. In one offering though, the leavened breads were used, and they were the two leavened breads in the ‘wave offering.’ Then it has a positive connotation. ^{Lev.23:20} It was offered during the feast of weeks. The waving

(movement) of the bread suggests life. The Priest is a type of Christ and despite the bread having the leaven, the loaves of bread were made ‘alive.’ The waving denotes life. The breads suggest that the Church is cleansed by Christ even though it is tainted by the leaven. This offering was an exception, because the believers of the Church are continually exposed to the world of sin that is in enmity with God. The leaven will only disappear after the rapture. Sin or the leaven is still part of us, but nevertheless we are sacrificed. We are made alive before the Lord in the hands of the priest. So we are placed alive on the altar.

The Ram and Shrubs

‘Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. ¹¹ But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, Abraham, Abraham! And he said, here am I. ¹² He said, do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me. ¹³ And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son.’ ^{22:10-13}

The ram with its horns stuck in the bushes, replaced Isaac. So this ram whispered the same meaning as Isaac. The ram too is an image of the Church. We too are stuck in the bushes, the thickets with thorns and thistles that nearly choked us. The thorns and thistles are an image of the hardships of our life in general, and the law in particular. But we were rescued from the bushes and set free. And yet the ram was placed on the altar. That pictures exactly what happened with you and me. We are indeed freed from slavery and sin, the law and death that stifled us. But now we have the prospect to devote our lives to God on the altar. There is no alternative. That’s the only goal of our salvation. He has redeemed us so we might spend the freedom we attained, to serve our God under the new covenant.

The Lord will provide

‘So Abraham called the name of that place, the Lord will provide; as it is said to this day, on the mount of the Lord it shall be provided. ¹⁵ And the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven ¹⁶ and said, by myself I have sworn, declares the Lord, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son.’ ^{22:14-16}

The expression ‘the Lord will provide’ implies that God planned the opportunity, in the broadest sense of the term. Certainly God had met our needs when He allowed the Lord Jesus to be crucified for all the sins of the world. He paid the penalty for sin. Then everything succeeded. God has chosen the resurrected Christ to represent the members of the Church and their dealings with God. He presents their gifts to God and offers sacrifices for their sins. ^{Heb.5: 1} If God Himself provided such a great High Priest, then the Lord Himself will also provide a people for His name. That is not Israel living under the law or in the thickets, but the Church under the new covenant. The Lord will provide everything what He deems essential, and that is the positive aspect of the story. The negative aspect is that the Lord will surely punish those who evade him. The judgments that the Lord will bring about on the unbelieving world with His second

coming and the 'last day' can be grouped under the phrase 'the Lord will provide.'

'For I will surely bless thee, and multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven and as the sand which is on the shore of the sea, and thy seed will possess the gate of his enemies. ¹⁸ And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed My voice.'

Here the promises God made to Abraham, are confirmed, and all those who are assigned to the seed of Abraham and Isaac. This promise is literally spelled out in Galatians.

'And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, in you shall all the nations be blessed. ⁹ So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.' Gal 3:8, 9

'Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree' — ¹⁴ so that, in Christ Jesus, the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.' Gal 3:13, 14

The seed of Abraham is Christ, including the Church. Abraham did dedicate his life to the Lord. Abraham served the Lord in all areas of his life, and established many altars, and now he sacrifices his son. It pictures the Church as a whole. Isaac, is hardly mentioned in the Bible, but he asked at one moment: Is there not a sacrifice to be offered? Gen.22: 7 He is the sacrifice. He sacrificed himself wholly. It says: 'I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, ¹⁸ and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice." ¹⁹ So Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beersheba. And Abraham lived at Beersheba.' Heb.11:17-19

We have died with Christ. At the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. We lost our lives. But in return we have regained a far greater treasure, a life exceeding all expectations. We are raised with Christ having all our expectations in heaven. That carries a great responsibility, so we need to be true our high calling. We need to be ever conscious that we are the children of the most High God and a true treasure of our Lord. We are the servants and priests of God. It needs to captivate our minds and body, and it will surely overflow our heart, as a cup that overflows with blessing. Psa.23:5 We are redeemed, with the idea to serve Him. We are untangled from the thickets to be placed on the altar.

We are sacrificed alive, and we are His property. That is the practical facet, and we need to grasp it. The essence of the sacrifice is to prove we have new life as part of the new covenant and we are committed to God. We should no longer serve sin, hiding the law and death. We are God's masterpiece. He created us anew in Christ Jesus so we can do the good things he planned for us a long time ago. ^{Eph.2:10} In the simple narrative of Genesis 22, we do trace the present position of the Lord Jesus Christ and thus the Church.

When we are placed on the altar, we are indeed dead to the world. We need to appreciate we did die to the world, the law and the sin. For a reason we attained something far greater, and we are made alive to God, and all our works in Him will be rewarded handsomely. ^{Rom. 6} We must learn to surrender ourselves to Him. We need to see ourselves differently as we are now part of Christ. As a prisoner like Isaac, who is tied and placed on the altar.

How free are you to this world? If it is your free option to approach the altar, then you are completely free. That was true with Isaac, as he allowed himself to be tied to the altar. He had no fibre of revolt, and throughout he remained submissive. It reflects our place in the resurrected Christ who gave Himself for us, once He was resurrected from the dead. The word 'He gave Himself for our sins' is that He committed Himself wholly to cleanse us. He is devoted to this particular task. He has made Himself available for the work that the Father entrusted Him to do, and He will prove to be faithful to achieve His objective. He was commissioned to ensure the formation of the Church in our times. We are prisoners of Jesus Christ, and we are expected to place ourselves submissively at the altar as Isaac did. We need to be accustomed to the idea as it already happening. We need to conform our lives accordingly to what He made possible with His resurrection. It is a life of faith. It is not what He accomplished with His death, but with His resurrection. Since then He became our High Priest after the order of Melchizedek. He achieved this with His resurrection, and we can trust Him. If we do, then our lives will be employed to His glory. Then only will we conform ourselves to his wishes, to benefit from the work He already accomplished in us. The great triumph is not His death on the cross, but what He attained with His resurrection from the dead. Then He became the great High Priest after the order of Melchizedek. He now sacrifices His life for the Church, for you and me today. It's happening ever since we wisely chose to we become members of His Body, the Church in heaven.